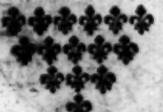
BEHOLD THE HUSBANDMAN.

S. *James* 5. 7.

Ora & Labora.



By Clem. Barksdale

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To his Loving Friends, and Parishioners.

THis short Discourse I offer you, in remembrance of my Care, to have you be delighted with your daily Labours; and withal, to raise up your thoughts from Earth to Heaven, to that God, who maketh his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall upon your Fields, and giveth you to eat the Labors of your hands with comfort. To his continued favor I daily commend you and yours.

C. B.

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S. James 5. 7.

Behold the Husbandman.

THe word, *Behold*, is usually set before things of our careful Observation. I invite you therefore to a serious view of Husbandry; the consideration whereof, as it may be delightful to all, so will it be especially useful to them, whose business is to labor, and spend most of their time in tilling of the earth. For whose sake I intend in a plain order to declare these two points.

1. The commendations, and praise of Husbandry.

2. The complaints and grievances of it, together with the Remedies and Answers.

I. *Of the commendation and praise of Husbandry.*

1. HEre we will look upon the original and beginning of this employment. We read in *Gen.* 2. 15. *The Lord God took the man* (*Adam* our first Father, from whom all Mankind was descended,) *and put him into the Garden of* Eden, *to dress it, and to keep it.* This was the calling, this the imployment of Man in the state of Innocency, wherein he was created, to keep and dress a Gar-

den, a piece of Husbandry. And this no small commendation, that it was the first employment, the first business God himself put man upon before the Fall. An innocent Labor, well became the state of Innocency.

After the Fall, when *Adam* had sinned by eating the forbidden Fruit, as we read *Genesis* 3. God dispossessed *Adam* of that pleasant Garden, and instead of that easie and delightful exercise of dressing the Garden, and keeping it, put him to plow, bound him to this harder labor of raising Corn of barren ground, by the sweat of his brows. For the earth was Cursed for the sin of Man, and would not

yield

yield Fruit to him that had rebelled against his Maker, until it was overcome by laborious tillage. *In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat thy bread.* Gen. 3. 19. However, though the Calling be laborious, you see it is by Gods appointment, and it was the work wherein the Father of all Mankind was imployed, to till the ground. This Antiquity and beginning of Husbandry is that we observe in the first place. It is the most antient Calling.

2. Next to the Antiquity of this imployment, you may take notice of the necessity thereof. Bread is the staff of life, and therefore where we

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are taught in the *Lords Prayer* to ask for maintenance, we are commanded to say, *Give us Bread.* And when *Jacob* desired of God to sustain him in his Travels, and promised that for such a favor he would be Gods faithful Servant, Bread is named, *If the Lord saith he, will give me Bread to eat.* Gen. 28. 20. Bread is the most substantial food, that which is of most concernment to us, and for this reason it goes for all. Now Bread is that which God hath ordained to be the fruit of the Husbandmans labor. The Husbandman plows the ground, the ground yieldeth Corn, by Gods blessing on it, and of Corn is made Bread. Many

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other things may be spared, but Bread may not be wanting. *The profit of the earth is for all: the King himself is served by the Field.* Eccles. 5. 9. From the highest to the lowest, all have need of Bread; it is our daily sustenance. Husbandry therefore is the most necessary Calling.

3. If Husbandry be so antient, and so necessary, it must needs be Honorable. And so it hath been of high esteem in the most famous Kingdoms and Commonwealths. You heard but now from *Ecclesiastes*, That the King himself is saved by the Field. A just cause it is, that the King should respect, and hold with tillage.

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In the 2 *Chron.* 26. We find a great commendation of one of the good Kings of *Judah*, by name *Uzziah*; and among the rest of his noble acts, it is mentioned for his Honor; *That he loved Husbandry*, v. 10. This is something out of the sacred History.

For other Nations, none was so rich in good Examples as the old Commonwealth of *Rome*; none ever set a greater esteem on Husbandry. The Senators themselves and Fathers of their Country, such as were most wise in Counsel, and most valiant in Arms, did not disdain Agriculture, but made the tilling of their tract a great part of their care and exercise. Most memorable is that

that related by the *Roman* Histories of one of their Dictators, that was called from the Plow, and sent to command their Army. When he had conquered the enemy, and delivered his Country from great danger, *Redit ad boves triumphata Agricola*: This triumphant Husbandman returned to his Plow again. I may add to this, that in ancient times Plow-men were so much regarded by Armies of Soldiers near each other in the Field, that the Husbandman followed his work without disturbance. Husbandry is an honorable Calling.

4. Not only most ancient, necessary, honorable, but it

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is pleasant also. The pleasantness of Husbandry, that's the fourth Commendation of it. See here the goodness of God mixt with his severity. You heard before out of *Gen.* 3. that the ground was Cursed for Mans sin; and that Man was sentenced to sweat for his Bread. Here is, you will say, the severity of God. But let us observe his goodness too, in turning their labor and pains into the delight and pleasure of the honest Husbandman. He submits willingly to Gods Ordinance, and seeing God has commanded him to labor hard, labor he will; and it is more pleasant a great deal to him to labor than to be idle. He sweats,

but his ſweat is ſweet. He plows either in the clay, or the ſtony ground: the Birds of the air in the mean time make him muſick, yea and he makes himſelf muſick at his work, and either ſings or whiſtles his melodious Notes, whilſt his eye and his hand direct the Plow. When he returns home from the Field, he brings a good ſtomach with him, which makes even the courſeſt fare more delightful, than the dainties of other men, and after all, *The ſleep of the laboring man is ſweet, whethether he eat little or much.* Eccleſ. 5. 12.

Hence it is, from his daily labor and exerciſe of body, from the wholſome air he breaths

breaths in the open Field, from his plain Diet, and the good reſt attending it: That the Husbandman uſually enjoys that which is the moſt valuable and ſweeteſt bleſſing of this life, conſtant health and vigor, and ſtrength of body; which makes him not only the more chearful in his own vocation, but more able to ſerve his King and Country when he is called to it.

And this might be another commendation of Husbandry, that it hath yielded men moſt ſerviceable in the Wars. Surely, the ſtrength of the Engliſh Armies is reported by our Hiſtorians to have conſiſted in the Yeomanry, in thoſe times of old, when the Engliſh Na-

tion carried their victorious Ensigns over *France*, and other Countries. This I do but touch, and conclude our first point, concerning the commendation of Husbandry from the Antiquity, Necessity, Honor, and Pleasure of it: Four particulars which may abundantly suffice to procure a greater Regard thereof.

And I cannot pass to the next point, before I have made some Reflection upon the unthankfulness both of Husbandmen themselves, and of Men that are of other Callings.

Husbandmen themselves, many of them seem not to acknowledg the worthiness and use-

uſefulneſs of their courſe of life. They do not rightly value the bleſſing of God; who gives them to *eat the labor of their hands*, to uſe the words of the 128 *Pſalm*. They follow not their buſineſs with that integrity and alacrity, which becomes their innocent and uſeful Calling Think upon Gods Ordinance, that hath appointed you to your labor; think upon the great benefit of your labors to the commonwealth; think upon the happineſs of having health of body, wholeſome diet, undiſturbed ſleep, and be not contented only, but thankful that God hath placed you in ſuch a way of life. Husbandmen were happy, if they did

conſider well the happineſs of their Calling. *Felices nimium bona ſi ſua norint.*

And Men of other Callings may be taxed of injuſtice and unthankfulneſs, who ſlights the Husbandman that provides them Bread. Let not the fine Gentleman, nor the rich Citizen, pride himſelf in ſoft apparel, or dainty fare, and deride the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the Husbandman. They cannot live without Bread, and this comes from the labor of the plain, ſimple Husbandman.

But leaſt I ſeem to flatter my Husbandman, and blow him up with a vain opinion of himſelf, or lay him to ſleep in ſecurity, let me now proceed

ceed from the praiſes of the Husbandmans Calling, to the Complaints and Grievances, together with their Remedies and Anſwers.

II. *Of the Complaints or Grievances of Husbandry.*

1. THe Husbandman, being the Man that fetches his profits out of the earth, is in danger of being earthly minded. Obſerve the Plow-man at his work: He boweth his body toward the ground, leaning upon his Plow: He hath his eye fixed on the Furrow: He ſeems to love the very ſmell of the dung and ſoil wherewith his land

land is made more fruitful. To walk among his Corn, to see it prosper, and grow more and more ready for the harvest, is his great delight: To have seasonable weather is his desire: The Inning of his Corn, and carrying of it out to market is his care; and these things are so much in his Thoughts, so much in his Talk, that the fear is, lest he cleave too much to the earth, and to these temporal things pertaining to our present life, not minding, as he ought, things heavenly and eternal, in comparison whereof all earthly profits are contemptible. 'Tis a hard matter for Men so much conversant with earth, and looking so much upon

upon it, to raise up their minds to heaven. This is the complaint.

To prevent or correct this too much minding of the world, and love of earthly things, Scripture and Reason afford us helps and remedies sufficient. Reason it self may teach us the vanity and uncertainty of worldly youth: That the things we possess are subject to many casualties, and may be taken from us; and that we our selves are also liable to many accidents, and may be taken away we know not how soon from the things which we now possess. But then the Scripture comes in with loud Admonitions. *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the*

the Preacher, Eccleſ. 1. *All fleſh is graſs, and the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field*, ſaith the Prophet *Iſa.* 40. *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, ſath our Saviour: *And take no thought for your life, what you ſhall eat*, Matth. 6. *Love not the world, nor the things of the world*, ſaith S. *John*, 1 Epiſt. 2. ch. *what is your life*, ſaith St. *James*, *It is but a vapor*. Add to all this the example of the fooliſh Husbandman; who pleaſed himſelf in his full Barns, and truſted in the abundance of his fruits but is ſoundly checked for it, *Luke* 12. 20. All which may ſerve to ſecure our husbandman from danger, or to Cure him of his over much minding

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ing and setting his affection upon this earth; and may teach him to look up to Heaven to lay up riches there, where they shall be reserved for him as an immortal possession.

2. But it is urged again, that the Husbandman whose daily imployment is about this earth, and in providing for the body, can have but little time to bestow upon Religion, and the care of his Soul. And this may be perhaps in your thoughts, when I exhort you not to be earthly minded; you may think upon the multiplicity of your business, you must plow, and sow, and gather in, and thresh,

threſh, and carry out to market, and beſides take care of I know not how many matters more, belonging to your courſe of life; and you may wonder that any Preacher ſhould require of Tillers of the earth, and ſecular Men, that they ſhould be ſpiritual Men, and make Religion their buſineſs. To this I anſwer, That you muſt learn to follow worldly buſineſs with heavenly minds. That is thus; Conſider your Calling is ordained by God, and that when you do the works of your Calling rightly, you do then do God ſervice. Take the fear of God with you, aim at his glory as that great end of your life, behave your ſelf humbly, and

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honestly, and faithfully as before him. This having of right aims, this walking uprightly, this doing of worldly business in obedience to God, this minding of Gods presence with you, and his Providence over you, is the following of earthly affairs in a spiritual and heavenly manner, and may justly be accounted the true serving of God.

But then withal, no Man must so far engage himself to the affairs of this world, but he must have some time of freedom to attend upon the immediate service of God in holy duties, both publick in the Congregation, private in the Family, and yet more private in the Closet, or any se-

cret place. I ſay, No Man muſt forget theſe, but ſo order his worldly buſineſs, that Religion may not be neglected, that the ſoul may not be unprovided for, that holy duties may not be omitted.

This our Husbandman will be the more careful of, I mean to afford time for holy duties, by conſidering, that it is the Lords bleſſing which makes the earth fruitful. In vain you riſe up early, and ſit up late; in vain you toil and labor, except the Lord proſper you, except he ſend the former and later rain, and make the Sun to ſhine upon the Land. Therefore it is, that in Scripture, the food we have out of the earth for our ſelves,

and

and for our Cattle, is not so much ascribed to the care and labor of the Husbandman, as to the goodness and bounty of God. *The eyes of all wait upon thee O Lord, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.* Psal. 145. 15, 16.

3. 'Tis a great complaint and grievance, That the Husbandman after all his care and pains, and labor, meets with many crosses, and losses. After his diligent plowing and sowing, sometimes he does not receive his seed again: sometimes his harvest is spoiled by immoderate rain, and unseasonable weather: some-

times his laboring Cattle are diſeaſed, and die upon his hands: ſometimes the markets fall, and the price of Corn anſwers not his expectation, nor his labor and charge to raiſe it. Theſe, and more ſad accidents may make a Countrymans life not very deſirable.

But to give ſome Anſwer to this alſo: I would know of you what Calling in the world is free from loſſes, and croſſes. Are not the Merchants Ventures in great perils? Are not their Ships, however richly laden, ſometimes caſt away in the tempeſtuous Sea, and ſwallowed in the deep, ſometimes rob'd and plundered by the Pirates?

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Do not Shop-keeperse iether, by ill bargains, or bad customers sometimes break? Are not all humane affairs subject to changes, and chances? Wherefore, if we would not be within a possibility of any calamity, we must altogether forsake the earth, and have no commerce with the present world.

All that I can say here is this: We must not by our own negligence make to our selves, and create crosses: We must walk very circumspectly in all our affairs, and take heed that we be not injured and abused by a deceitful world. The crosses which God shall lay upon us, we must learn to bear patiently, and find out

the right uſe of every accident. And we muſt ſet the good we have gotten, againſt the evil we ſuffer. The honeſt Husbandman, if he fail of his hopes one year, will comfort himſelf with the fruitfulneſs of another year. If at one time he hath a bad market, another time will make amends. If his loſs be heavy now, his gain may be as great hereafter. But ſuppoſe he ſhould be impoveriſht by caſualties, and adverſities: His breeding, and courſe of life enables him to bear hardſhips and want a great deal more eaſily, than ſuch as are of a more delicate and ſoft temper, and condition. And this I take to be no ſmall advantage

of

of our Husbandman, when the worst that can come, falls upon him.

4. One more complaint, and it is a great grievance in the eye of many Husbandmen, that their Lands are subject to heavy Taxes, and to the payment of Tithes. Hence ariseth occasion of murmuring and discontent, that all the fruits of their labors, and profits of their estates should not go into their own Coffers. But let us consider.

The Taxes first and Tribute which is called for by the State; Is it not for the maintenance of Peace amongst us? Is it not for the defence of the Kingdom? Is not that which

we

we pay to the King given him by Act of Parliament, the Representative of the whole Nation? So then, if that which the Husbandman payeth to the publick, be paid according to the Laws of the Land; if it be paid to a very good end and purpose, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, and enjoy our lives, and liberties, and estates in safety: Surely, this is not a just matter of complaint. At this be not troubled, be not grieved.

Then also for Tithes paid to the Church, Shall our Husbandmen be worse than *Jews?* The Ministers of their Law had Cities, and Lands, and Tithes, and Offerings, which are found upon a just account

of Learned Men, far, very far to exceed the portion of the Ministers of the Gospel. And yet the Gospel is a far better Ministration, as S. *Paul* declareth, 2 *Cor.* 3. Again, Shall our Husbandmen have less Faith in God than the *Jews?* Among them it was received as a most certain truth, *Da decimus ut ditescas*: Pay thy Tithes well, and be rich. The just and chearful payment of Tithes was the right way to prosper, and to have Gods blessing upon their Land. They had a Prayer to be used at the end of Tithing, wherein they lay'd claim to the blessing promised: Lord, now look down from thy holy Habitation, and bless thy people,

and

and bless the Land which thou hast given us. *Deut.* 26. 15. Briefly, if Tithes by the antient Laws of this Land, are given and solemnly directed to God and his Church. (*Deo & Ecclesiæ*; so it is in the Records,) To God and his Church: If they are held by Ministers, by as good right, as other Free-men holds their estates: If they are neither to be bought nor sold by the Tenant-holders: If the end of them be for the Glory of God, and the everlasting good of Gods people: Then of this payment to be duly and truly made by the honest Husbandman, I may also pronounce: Be not troubled at it, Be not grieved.

Thus

Thus Beloved, you have heard, as in the first part, the commendation of Husbandry, from the Antiquity, Necessity, Honor, and Pleasure of it: So in our later part, the Complaints and Grievances, in as much as Men that till the earth, are apt to be earthly minded; and secondly, that they have so much worldly business, as not to spare time for duties of Religion; and thirdly, that they are exposed to many losses and crosses, and fourthly, that their Lands are burthened with payment of Taxes, and Tithes. You have heard of all the Answers and Remedies, for those Complaints and Grievances.

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Conclusion.

IT remains only to conclude with a short exhortation, and that shall be by calling you off from the earthly to the spiritual Husbandry. As you till your ground, so must your selves also be tilled and manured. For ye are Gods Husbandry, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 3, 9. The Ministers of the Gospel are Gods Husbandmen to manure and cultivate your souls. Be not, I beseech you, like unto the Rook, that will not receive the seed of Gods Word. Do not suffer the Word that is scattered amongst you to be unprofitable. As you expect fruit from the Land

that

that you beſtow pains upon; as you look for a harveſt: So do you bring forth fruit unto God, and let not our labor be in vain. The fruit which the earth yieldeth, is but for the maintenance of this ſhort, and tranſitory life: but the Fruit of the Word of God, the Fruit of the Spirit, holineſs and righteouſneſs, this Fruit endureth to Eternity. This Fruit, this moſt precious Fruit, that you may bring forth plentifully. God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. To whom, *&c.*

FINIS.

THE GOOD HOUSHOLDER

1. HE not only provideth temporal maintenance for his Children, and Servants; but taketh care of their ſpiritual eſtate, and feedeth their ſouls as well as their bodies.

2. His endeavor is, that every one of the Houſhold may attend upon Gods ſervice in the Church, as well as follow their ordinary buſineſs in the Houſe, Field, or Market.

3. Prayer, and Reading, and Catechiſing is duly obſerved in his Family. And for the better ordering thereof, direction is taken from Gods Miniſter, the Guide

of Souls, not only by publick ministration, but by private and particular assistance also. With whom he delighteth often to confer about things Divine, and the care of his Soul.